

**SUBLEC INTERNATIONAL  
WORKSHOP/SEMINAR/COLLOQUIUM**

**A SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR REVEALING SOCIAL AND  
FISCAL FRAUD**

**BRUSSELS, FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE SOCIAL  
SECURITY, 25 FEBRUAR 2008**

Organised by

Federal Administration Social Security

Science Policy

the Higher Institute for Labour Studies (HIVA) of the Catholic University of  
Leuven

CREPP Centre de Recherche en Economie Publique et de la Population University of  
Liège

Centre de sociologie du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la formation, University of Brussels

## AIM OF THE CONFERENCE

In 2008 and 2009 the Federal Public Service Social Security and the Belgian Science Policy will organize a large scale survey on social and fiscal fraud or the so called underground economy. Large definitions of fraud will be used, covering as well undeclared work as other undeclared income. The direct methodology of asking the citizen, worker or consumer its demand and supply of undeclared work and income, is one of the methodologies to estimate size and profile of this phenomena. It could be oriented to the total population, or the active population, or oriented to certain risk categories. Surveys could be oriented also to the firms, small or larger, independent workers, free professions. It can include only the issue of undeclared work, or the use and misuse of social benefits, the non declaration of other income, for instance capital income. Fiscal pressure, red tape, control and law enforcement, tax morale, those are often mentioned as the determinants of social and fiscal fraud, and could be questioned. How to include in the sample special risk groups. What can be learned form surveys with benefit users and the possible social fraud? How to formulate the questionnaire and what design is appropriate. And what are the potential results? The response? The usefulness for research. The relevance for statistical, policy and control matters.

It is the last years also promoted by the European Commission as one of the promising methods. But revealing the covered and reporting on socially less or not accepted activities is methodologically difficult. The Eurobarometer recently organized on this issue demonstrated promising but also disappointing results.

To scan the new methodological possibilities about sample, questionnaire and roll out, its mode, all will be discussed with the ambition to learn form recent experience in organizing and analyzing those results is the aim of this seminar. The conclusion of the seminar will be used as an input for the further organising the survey in Belgium. The Belgian survey will probably be focused on the general population and independent workers. For that reason experience from population surveys and business surveys will be combined.

The research team, international experts will be confronted with an audience national experts in survey research in Belgium and at European level from statistical offices and universities, and also with the experts of the controlling authorities. For each paper a discussant will be invited.

## PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME (WORKING LANGUAGE ENGLISH)

### Morning Session

*Chairman of the morning session:*

*Jozef Pacolet (Hoger instituut voor de arbeid, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)*

08.30 *Welcome and coffee*

#### **Part I Welcome**

09.00 *Welcome : Tom Auwers / Koen Vleminckx: Federal Public Service Social Security and Aziz Naji: **Science Policy***

09.10 *Didier Verbeke, Federal Public Service Social Security, Ambition of SUBLEC*

#### **Part II Population oriented surveys**

9.20 *Friedrich Schneider, Recent experience in the use of surveys measuring and understanding the underground economy*

10.00 *Overview of surveys on social and fiscal fraud and its relevance for statistical and control issues: Jozef Pacolet and Sigrid Merckx, Hoger instituut voor de arbeid, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*

10.30 *Belgian experience with direct surveys and questions for the new survey: Sergio Perelman and Pierre Pestieau, **CREPP Centre de Recherche en Economie Publique et de la Population University***

11.00 *How to include groups at risk: clandestine workers, illegal migration, in the sample and how to reach them, E. Krzeslo, **Centre de sociologie du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la formation, University of Brussels***

11.30 *Coffee*

11.45 *Debate*

12.00 *The Experience of the Rockwool Foundation and its relevance for the fiscal administratio. Søren Pedersen, Ministry of Taxation and before Rockwool*

**Part III Some conclusions to go forward in Belgium with the SUBLEC-survey**

12.30 Didier Verbeke, Jozef Pacolet, Sergio Perelman and Estelle Krzeslo

13.00     *Debate*

### **13.15 Lunch**

### **Afternoon session**

*Chairman of the afternoon session:*

*Sergio Perelman, CREPP Centre de Recherche en Economie Publique et de la  
Population University*

14.00     *Lessons from the Eurobarometer 2007: Arnold Riedmann, Research Manager  
TNS Infratest Sozialforschung*

14.30     *Lessons from the Eurobarometer 2007: Sergio Perelman. Some additional  
analysis for Belgium*

15.00     *Lessons from the Eurobarometer 2007: relevance for Europe, Guido  
Vanderseypen, European Commission (tinvoited)*

15.30     *Debate*

15.45     *Coffee*

### **Part III Firms oriented surveys**

16.00     *Use of business surveys in detecting fraud: Jan Hanousek, CERGE-EI, Charles  
University, Prague*

16.30     *Feasibility of surveys in construction in Belgium: Jozef Pacolet, Hoger  
instituut voor de arbeid, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*

17.0     *Debate*